

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 7/5/2011 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding the applicant's argument that Ishihara does not disclose "cancellation of the lock function is completed while the mobile phone is in the opened state" (see page 5), the examiner kindly directs the applicant to Fig. 8 of Ishihara where Ishihara discloses a dial locked state 1 is changed into a dial unlocked state 2 after a secret number input 4 is performed. In addition, Ishihara specifically discloses dial locked state 1 and dial unlocked state 2 both include open state 2A and closed state 2B (see Ishihara, [0081]). In other words, while Ishihara's mobile phone is in open state, a dial lock setting operation 6 can be performed to turn the dial unlocked state 2 into dial locked state 1 and when a secret number input 4 is performed, dial locked state 1 is changed into dial unlocked state 2 (see Ishihara, Fig. 8 and [0089]). Therefore it is evident that Ishihara discloses "cancellation of the lock function is completed while the mobile phone is in the opened state".

Regarding the applicant's argument that Ishihara does not disclose "the temporary cancellation of the lock function is maintained for a predetermined time period after the last operation" (see page 5), the examiner respectfully disagrees. Ishihara discloses that a timer is started to count the time-out period after the mobile device is folded. Upon the timer expiration, the phone is locked (see Ishihara, [0092]). In other words, until the timer expires, the phone is temporarily maintained to be unlocked

for the duration of the time-out period set by the user after the phone is closed (see [0090]). Therefore Ishihara does disclose "the temporary cancellation of the lock function is maintained for a predetermined time period after the last operation".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ishihara (US 2002/0077079).

Regarding claim 1, Ishihara discloses a mobile communication device having an openable/closable cover (see Ishihara: Fig. 3, openable/closable cover 55), a plurality of first operation units that are operable regardless of whether the cover is opened or closed (see Ishihara: [0057] and Fig. 3, interface connector 53 is one of the functions whether the cover is opened or closed), a plurality of second operation units that are operable only when the case is opened (see Ishihara: [0057] and Fig. 3, control panel 52 and display 51 when the cover is opened), and a locking function for disabling processing associated with operation of the operation units (see Ishihara: [0081] dial lock function), comprising:

an opened/closed detection unit operable to detect an opened/closed state of the cover (see Ishihara: [0081] detecting open or closed states of the cover; also see Fig. 6, folded state detection 12);

a judging unit operable to judge whether a predetermined operation has been performed on at least one of the operation units with the cover in a closed state and the locking function enabled (see Ishihara: [0068], Ex. 9, secret number input to lock the phone, interface connection is detected or the folded state is detected); and

an operation control unit operable (see Ishihara: [0068]), when the judging unit has judged in the affirmative (see Ishihara: [0068] and Fig. 8, the phone is closed and locked), to enable processing associated with operation of at least one of the operation units by temporarily canceling the locking function (see Ishihara: [0010] Ishihara discusses a prior art where a second selection key for temporarily releasing the dial lock is pushed by the user; also see [0089] dial locked state 1 turned into the dial unlocked state 2 when a secret number is inputted from the control panel, therefore phone is unlocked; and see [0092] Ishihara discusses an automatic dial lock mode after a set time, therefore phone is locked again after a set time, thus a temporary unlocking function), wherein

while the locking function is being temporarily cancelled (see Ishihara: [0081] phone being unlocked), the operation control unit (i) enables the locking function by terminating the temporal cancellation of the locking function, if a predetermined time period has elapsed since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units or if the case is opened (see Ishihara: [0081] and Fig. 8, "5" indicates the phone is transitioned to locked state when the phone is detected open) , or (ii) maintains the temporal cancellation of the locking function unless the predetermined time period has elapsed since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units (see

Ishihara: [0092] dial lock is set when the dial lock setting timer reaches a time-out period. In other words the dial lock maintains unlocked until a predetermined time-out is reached).

Regarding claim 4, Ishihara discloses a method for controlling a mobile communication device having an openable/closable case(see Ishihara: Fig. 3, openable/closable cover 55), a plurality of first operation units that are operable regardless of whether the case is opened or closed (see Ishihara: [0057] and Fig. 3, interface connector 53 is functional regardless whether the cover is opened or closed), a plurality of second operation units that are operable only when the case is opened (see Ishihara: [0057] and Fig. 3, control panel 52 and display 51 when the cover is opened), and a locking function for disabling processing associated with operation of the first and second operation units (see Ishihara: [0081] dial lock function), comprising the steps of:

detecting an opened/closed state of the case (see Ishihara: [0081] detecting open or closed states of the cover; also see Fig. 6, folded state detection 12);

judging whether a predetermined operation has been performed on at least one of the first operation units with the case in a closed state and the locking function enabled (see Ishihara: [0068], Ex. 9, secret number input to lock the phone, detect the folded state);

when the judging step has judged in the affirmative, enabling processing associated with operation of at least one of the first operation units by temporarily canceling the locking function (see Ishihara: [0010] Ishihara discusses a prior art where

a second selection key for temporarily releasing the dial lock is pushed by the user; also see [0089] dial locked state 1 turned into the dial unlocked state 2 when a secret number is inputted from the control panel and [0092] Ishihara discusses an automatic dial lock mode after a set time, both of which suggests temporary unlocking function; [0081] and Fig. 8, while phone is locked and closed, user input secret code to unlock the phone); and

while the locking function is being temporarily cancelled(see Ishihara: [0081] phone being unlocked), (i) enabling the locking function by terminating the temporal cancellation of the locking function, if a predetermined time period has elapsed since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units or if the case is opened (see Ishihara: [0081] and Fig. 8, "5" indicates the phone is transitioned to locked state when the phone is detected open), or (ii) maintaining the temporal cancellation of the locking function unless the predetermined time period has elapsed since a last operation performed on at least one of the first operation units (see Ishihara: [0092] dial lock is set when the dial lock setting timer reaches a time-out period).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishihara in view of Hansen et al. (US 6370362), hereinafter "Hansen", and further in view of A5306ST Instruction Manual, hereinafter "Instruction Manual", cited by applicant's IDS.

Regarding claim 3, Ishihara discloses the mobile communication device having a display operable to display information with the case in an opened state (see Ishihara: Fig. 3 display 51) but does not specifically disclose a screen operable to display information with the case in a closed state, wherein the first operation units include an operation unit provided on a same surface as the screen and a side key provided on a main body lateral surface, and processing associated with operation of the operation unit provided on the same surface as the sub-screen is disabled when the lock function is enabled.

In the same field of endeavor, Hansen discloses a screen operable to display information with the case in a closed state (see Hansen, Fig. 1, a screen when the case is closed), wherein the first operation units include an operation unit provided on a same surface as the sub-screen (see Hansen, Figs. 1 and 2, roller key 10 is on the same surface as the display when the case is closed) and a side key provided on a main body lateral surface (see Hansen, Fig. 1, side keys on the on the main body lateral surface), and processing associated with operation of the operation unit provided on the same surface as the sub-screen is disabled when the lock function is enabled (see Hansen, col. 7 lines 13-15, roller key 10 is disabled when user selects "Lock Keys").

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Ishihara, to have a screen

the user can access when the case is closed, to have a function key on the same surface as the screen that user can perform certain functions when the case is closed, and to have a key on the lateral surface of the main body of the phone that user can use to perform certain function, as taught by Hansen (see Hansen, col. 7 lines 13-17), for the advantages of providing greater convenience to the user for accessing various functions of the phone even when the case is in a closed state and at the same time protecting the phone from mis-use, thus enhancing user satisfaction.

The combination of Ishihara and Hansen discloses a screen operable to display information with the case in a closed state but does not disclose a sub-screen operable to display information with the case in a closed state.

In the same field of endeavor, Instruction Manual discloses a sub-screen operable to display information with the case in a closed state (see Instruction Manual, page 6 for main screen when the case is open and sub-screen when the case is closed).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Ishihara, to provide a sub-screen when the phone is closed so that the user can access information via the sub-screen when the phone is closed (see Instruction Manual, page 6 for main screen and sub-screen), as taught by Instruction Manual, thus providing greater convenience to the user by having a secondary display when the phone is folded for the advantages of improving the utility of the phone.

Conclusion

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to KATHY WANG-HURST whose telephone number is (571)270-5371. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 7:30am-5pm, alternate Fridays, EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kamran Afshar can be reached on (571) 272-7796. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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